THE RAGTIMER

NOVEMBER 1971

DECEMBER 1971

PUBLISHED BY

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CLASSICAL RAGTIME

RECORDED RAGTIME TREASURES

RSR 01

CLASSIC & MODERN RAGS.....
.....TOM SHEA

Side One
Spasm Rag.....(Shea)
Hasty Pudding.....(Shea)
Venial Sin.....(Shea)
Johnny Walker Rag.....(Shea)
Prairie Queen.....(Shea)
The Storyville Sport.....(Shea)
Black Mike's Curse.....(Shea)

Side Two
Stoptime Rag.....(Joplin)
Euphonic Sounds.....(Joplin)
St. Louis Rag.....(Turpin)
Something Doing.....(Joplin)
Pineapple Rag.....(Joplin)
Original Rags.....(Joplin)

RSR 02

PRAIRIE RAGTIME.....
.....TOM SHEA

Side One
Mississippi Rag.....(Krell)
Ma Ragtime Baby.....(Stone)
Swipesy Cake Walk...(Marshall & Joplin)
Creole Belles.....(Lampe)
Pegtown Patrol.....(Shea)

Side Two
Brun Campbell Express.....(Shea)
R. F. D.....(Shea)
Oliver Road Rag.....(Shea)
Trillium Rag.....(Shea)
Corinthian Rag.....(Shea)
Rosebud Rag.....(Shea)

RSR 04

RAGTIME DOWN THE LINE.....
.....CHARLIE RASCH

Side One
St. Louis Tickle..(Barney & Seymore)
Slippery Elm Rag.....(Woods)
Fashion Rag.....(Cohen)
New Orleans Joys.....(Morton)
Boomerang Rag.....(Botsford)
Possum Rag.....(Dobyns)

Side Two
Casa Loma Stomp.....(Gifford)
Blind Boone's Rag Medley No. 1
.....(Boone)
Blind Boone's Rag Medley No. 2
.....(Boone)
Cum-Bac Rag.....(Johnson)
War Bride Blues..(LeBlanc & Marten)
Down Home Rag.....(Sweatman)

RSR 07

THE ENTERTAINER.....
.....MAX MORATH

Side One
The Entertainer.....(Joplin)
Slippery Elm.....(Woods)
A Real Slow Drag.....(Joplin)
Ragtime Nightingale.....(Lamb)
The Ragtime Dance.....(Joplin)
Alabama Jigger.....(Claypoole)

Side Two
The Cascades.....(Joplin)
Swipesy Cakewalk....(Marshall & Joplin)
Russian Rag.....(Cobb)
Grace & Beauty.....(Scott)
Polyragmic.....(Morath)
Carrie's Gone To Kansas City
.....(Boone & Morath)

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RAGTIME...
UNDER YOUR HAT

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY
INCORPORATED

is a non - profit corporation having the following objects:

To preserve classical ragtime music and to pursue such other activities as shall serve to maintain and develop interest in classical ragtime music and music related thereto.

To Every MEMBER
Of The SOCIETY

GREETINGS
And
The COMPLIMENTS
Of The SEASON

from the DIRECTORS of
THE RAGTIME SOCIETY Inc.

THE RAGTIMER takes this opportunity to thank the members of the SOCIETY for their loyal support during the past year and to extend BEST WISHES for the NEW YEAR.

We hope your renewal of membership for the year 1972 is already in the mail. If not, our next hope is that you will take the necessary steps without delay. The continuation of your membership from year to year provides the financial assistance required to meet the costs of publishing THE RAGTIMER and of providing other services for our membership. The cause for RAGTIME, in keeping it a viable music in today's world, requires all the help it can get.

Since the last issue of THE RAGTIMER we have had two happenings in Toronto which were important to RAGTIME. The first event was the appearance in this City, on October 14th, of Max Morath and his tremendous one-man show "AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY". If you have not already attended a performance by Max, then don't miss the opportunity if his show turns up in your vicinity. The second event came on November 6th, when the SOCIETY'S annual bash was held at the CARA INN . A reporting of details will be found elsewhere in this issue.

Incidentally, we will be making an effort to advance as much as possible our preparations for the publication of this issue of THE RAGTIMER. The reason will be obvious. We have no control over the movement of this class of mail during the pre-Christmas build up. Our aim is to reach you before the "Joyous Season" begins.

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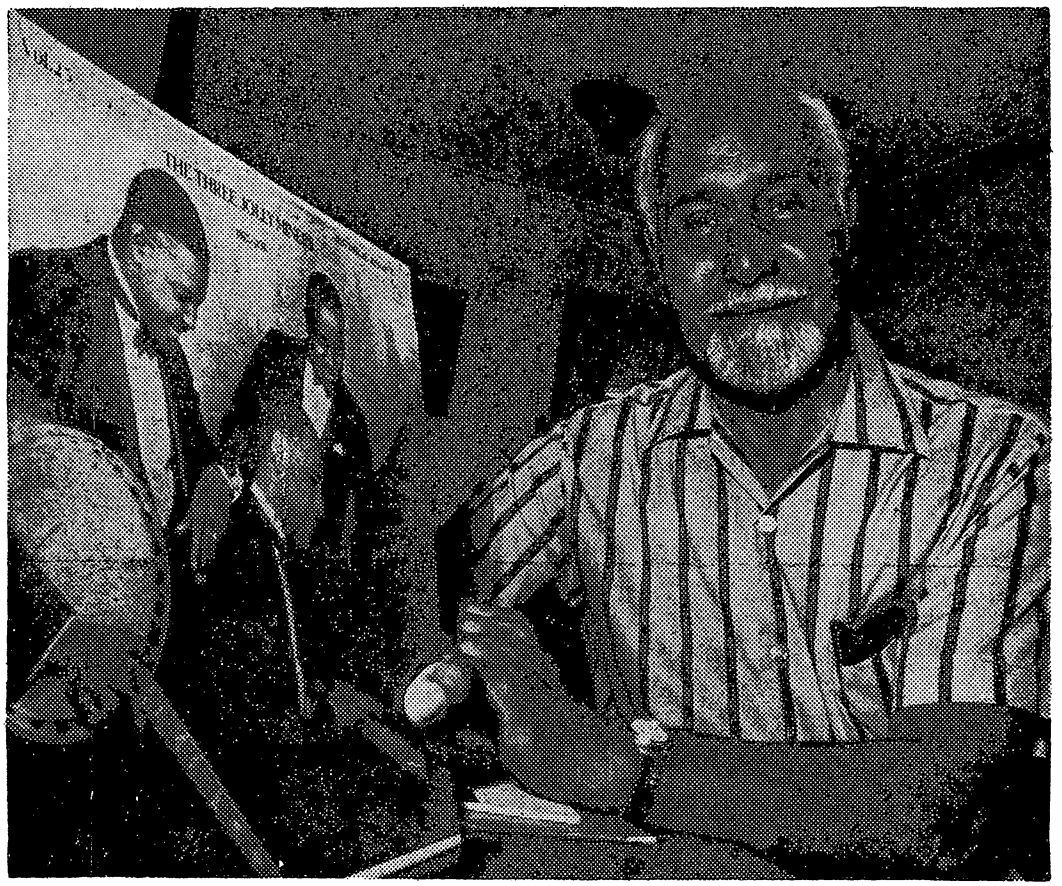
LOU HOOPER: AS FULL OF MUSIC AS EVER

In the August 7th, 1971 issue of the Montreal paper "THE SATURDAY GAZETTE" an article appeared that had been written by Dane Lanken of THE GAZETTE with picture by Garth Pritchard. It was the result of an interview with Lou Hooper who is now 77 years of age. Lou is another of the oldtimers who came out of the ragtime era. Lou also happens to be one of THE RAGTIME SOCIETY'S valued members. He sent us a copy of the article for our own files. We liked this informative article so much that we decided to reprint it so that it could be shared with all our members. (Ed.)



HE STARTED WHEN HE WAS THREE.

NOW HE'S 77....AND IN BETWEEN IT NEVER STOPPED

"From the time I sang in a Christmas concert at the age of three, my music has never stopped."

Louis Hooper said that. He was sitting at home, talking about the 74 years he's

spent making music, in Detroit theatres and Montreal nightclubs, in Harlem recording studios and in little country churches.

"I was born to play music", said the man who was Paul Robeson's piano accompanist, who backed Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith, who recorded with Ethel Waters and Rosa Henderson - all in the 1920s - and who is today as musically agile as ever.

Hooper came to Montreal in the '30s, supplied some of the music for this city's swinging night club era, and decided to stay on. Today, looking 25 years younger than he is, Hooper lives in a comfortable N. D. G. apartment with his Welsh-born wife and one daughter. Four older daughters and a son by a previous marriage live elsewhere.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Until last year, he was still playing the piano on a regular and professional basis, on the Laurentien hotel circuit. Nowadays he divides his time between volunteer work with local kiddies, and writing his autobiography, a project his wife is sharing.

The day I talked to Hooper, he sat with a piano on one side and a pile of old photographs and documents on the other, playing the odd tune in a fine old style, and selecting appropriate papers as his life unfolded.

The story begins in 1894, in Buxton, Ont. Hooper was one of 11 children of a Cree Indian mother and an Irish and black father who died before he was born. A little later the family moved to Ypsilanti, Mich., where Hooper, at three, had learned enough songs from his older brothers to sing in a Christmas concert.

At seven he could read music, and was well into his 10 year association with the St. Luke's Episcopal Church choir. At 12 he was playing trombone and piano in a band with two brothers (who played violin and trumpet); at 15 he enrolled at the Detroit Conservatory of Music, where he won a bachelor of music degree; and by 16 he had joined the American Federation of Musicians.

SUCCESS

The Hooper Brothers Band acheived some success in Detroit, and lasted (except for a year that Hooper spent in France with the U. S. Army) until 1921. The band opened and was a regular attraction at the Koppin Theatre, where the featured performers included Ma Rainey, Ethel Waters, Ernest Whitman and Sammy Davis Senior.

"Ma was an ugly woman", Hooper remembers. "Very fat. But with a lovely personality and boy, could she sing the blues! Her show, a company of black performers, was called The Rabbitfoot Minstrels. Bessie Smith, who was about 16 at the time, was in that outfit."

In 1921 Hooper moved to New York and joined the faculty of the Martin-Smith Music School in Harlem. He stayed there for four years, and during that time began a new career as a recording pianist and arranger. He worked for Joe Davis, a 'recording

contractor' of the time, played in trios and bands of all sizes, by themselves or backing singers, and recorded hundreds of compositions.

"They were mostly blues and stomps", says Hooper. "Many of them were on the Ajax label, recorded in New York, pressed in Lachine, P.Q., released in Chicago and aimed at the Southern market.

"I was on half a dozen different labels, including Paramount, Okey and even Edison. One trio, composed of Elmer Snowden (banjo), Bob Fuller (clarinet) and myself recorded as The Three Monkey Chasers, the Three Hot Eskimos, The Choo Choo Jazzers, the Three Jolly Miners, the Rocky Mountain Trio, the Three Blues Chasers and the Bob Fuller Trio."

Nowadays, these records are collector's items. Jim Kidd, who as well as being Program Director at CFCF, is an old record head and president of the Montreal Vintage Music Society, says that "at least 500" Hooper recordings have turned up so far and more are uncovered every day.

RE-RELEASED

Some of Hooper's 1920s recordings have been re-released by an outfit called Historical Records Inc. On one reprint of tunes by the Three Jolly Miners, Carl Kendziora Jr. ("...well known in the jazz field for his exhaustive research into the annals of early jazz and blues...") writes of Hooper:

"Pianist, composer, arranger and teacher. Here is one of those unsung men who contributed greatly to the jazz scene for a number of years and then moved on to other activities and has been virtually forgotten. His recordings include accompaniments to most of the blues singers, including Rosa Henderson, Monette Moore, Hazel Meyers, Josie Miles, Maggie Jones, Ethel Waters, Lizzie Miles, Viola McCoy, George Williams, Blind Richard Yates, Mamie Smith and others."

Hooper has a remarkable recollection of those years; to researchers of the time he's nothing short of a living encyclopaedia. He's remembered recording dates and fellow musicians that previously were gaps in the researchers' files.

To the individual who is not an old record addict, most of those names will not mean very much. But the music is still fun. Hooper and his fellows made $7.50 a side (and no royalties), but it was good music, well played. The plunking banjo, the soaring clarinet, Hooper's steady piano, and the great old singers wailing the Weeping Willow Blues and Papa If You Can't Do No Better: charming music and priceless momentos of a bygone era.

"Oh man", says Hooper, "those times were something else. I knew Fats Waller and Willie "The Lion" Smith and the Duke. I remember one night at a place called the Hoofer's Club there was The Lion, Fats, Lucky Roberts and the great James P. Johnson all playing against one another. Finally it boiled down to Fats and James P. and then Fats got up and made that famous statement, "Ladies and gentlemen... here is an artist." James P. took a bow and the session broke up.

"I played at the Lafayette Theatre in Harlem, too. I was in the pit when Bessie Smith played there, and I was there the night that Louis Armstrong came to New York. He made his debut in Fletcher Henderson's band, playing the Wattha Callem Blues. The people received him almost boisterously, but he didn't like New York much and went back to Chicago shortly after that."

It was also in the mid-'20s in New York that Hooper became the piano accompanist for Paul Robeson. The great singer was then only beginning his career, having recently left Rutgers College with a law degree and all sorts of scholastic, athletic, debating and acting honors.

"He'd sing for his associates", Hooper recalled. "He was then in a play at the Harlem Y. It was those people who convinced him he ought to give a recital. I think his first concert was at Sherry's Hotel, with me accompanying him. We played out at the Pell's estate, too, and at Rutgers. There, he was the conquering hero returning; the students just wanted him to stay. He was absolutely idolized."

"But", said Hooper, referring to the 'trouble' that ended in Robeson's exile, "like so many other great men, he was sacrificed to stupidity. He said things that other people couldn't take and he left the country. It was a great shame; he was a brilliant man."

In 1928, Hooper left New York for what was to become "the highlight of my professional career."

That was his part in Lew Leslie's Blackbirds, a Broadway - style revue that's been described as the first really important all-Negro musical. Not only did it showcase the talents of a number of young stars, but its music was good enough to stay with us.

Hooper moved over to the piano and started playing a familiar tune.

"This song originated in Blackbirds", he said. "Cab Calloway's little sister, Harriet, sang it.

"I can't give you anything but love, baby", Hooper was singing, in a voice that was just too sweet for a man of 77. And then after a verse or two, "this is how they jazzed it up."

His left hand started bouncing two octaves at a time ("the old swing bass", he explained), and a light toe-tapping gave way to a highflying heel.

"It was the love song of the show", said Hooper, drifting back to 1971. "Blackbirds toured all around and ended up in Montreal in 1929."

But Hooper went back to Detroit again, played in a few bands, taught piano, and in '32 moved up to Toronto to join Myron Sutton's band, The Canadian Ambassadors. Here Hooper pulls out an old photograph of eight men, all standing in a row, all smiling from ear to ear, and all wearing the niftiest black pants and grey cutaways.

"We played popular songs and dance music", said Hooper. "In '33 we came to Montreal and took over at Connie's Inn, where the Frolics used to be and Texas Guinan

had been. The next year we moved over to the Hollywood, at St. Catherine and de Buillon.

FINE SHOWS

"There were fine shows there, all New York stars, black stars. Johnny Hudgins and Victoria Vigle were there. They would do pantomime and escape tricks, all sorts of things that were good entertainment then. I guess people would wonder what they were doing now."

"Billy Holiday was there, too. She was one of the great jazz singers even though she was only 16 or 17 then. Myra Johnson was there. She could really sing. Baby Wallace was our emcee. He went on to other things, like the movie Stormy Weather, with Bill Robinson who was known as Bojangles and whom I had played with in the Blackbirds. He was beautiful to watch."

"We even had our own baseball team at the Hollywood", Hooper continued, taking out another old photo, this one of a dozen young men, all smiling, and all impeccably dressed in old-fashioned striped baseball uniforms.

"Montreal was really jumping then. It was mad. The music was good. The nightclubs presented shows that were really shows. A party could come out for an evening and really get something in return; people could go out and enjoy themselves."

The next year, Hooper cut out of the night club business and organized a group called the Hooper Southern Singers. They sang spirituals and Stephen Foster tunes in schools and churches around Montreal. Hooper has a whole file full of recommendations they got in their three or four years of activity.

When the Second World War came along, Hooper joined up again, this time in the Royal Canadian Artillery. He spent six years in Europe, leading concert parties and bands all over, from the relative safety of the BBC to the front lines. Again, he's got a whole file full of letters commending his fine work under hazardous conditions.

BACK HERE

He came back to Montreal after the war, with a wife and family in tow, and opened a piano and voice studio downtown. In the Summers he played the Laurentien hotel circuit, ultimately moving up North and teaching music in St. Adele High School. He was also organist in St. Francis Church in St. Sauveur.

In fact, it's hard to find anyone who's spent any time in the Laurentiens who hasn't heard Lou Hooper at one place or another.

Today, Hooper's life is relatively quiet. He still takes the odd engagement for his musicianship seems to have deteriorated not one bit over the years. One gets the impression that it's the times that have changed and not Hooper.

He's just as full of music as ever.

RECORD REVIEW

by
TEX
WYNDHAM

'The Complete Piano Works Of Jelly Roll Morton' (4 - Lp boxed set)

Personnel: John W. 'Knocky' Parker, piano (selections marked 'P'), celeste (selections marked 'C') and harpsichord (selections marked 'H'); Marvin 'Smokey' Montgomery, banjo (selections marked '*'); Dick Brightwell or George Pryor, bass; Ruth Brightwell or Harvey Kindervater, drums.

Side 1

Audiophile 102 - 'Rags And Blues'

Superior Rag - P, C
Original Jelly Roll Blues - H
Frog-I-More Rag - P, C
Troublesome Rag * - P
The Pearls - H
Big Fat Ham - P, C

Side 2

Wolverine Blues - H
Mr. Jelly Lord - H
Kansas City Stomps - H
London Blues - H, C
Grandpa's Spells - H
Wild Man Blues - H

Audiophile 103 - 'Spanish Rhythms'

King Porter Stomp - P
Mama 'Nita - P
Perfect Rag - P, C
35th Street Blues - P
Milenberg Joys - H
New Orleans Blues - H

Shreveport Stomp - P
Tom Cat Blues - H, C
Dead Man Blues - H, C
Chicago Breakdown - H
State And Madison * - P
Black Bottom Stomp - H

Audiophile 104 - 'Barrelhouse And Stomps'

Sidewalk Blues - H, C
Cannon Ball Blues - P
Hyena Stomp * - P
Jungle Blues * - P
Freakish * - P
Seattle Hunch - P, C

Fickle Fay Creep * - P
Fat Frances * - P
Crazy Chord Rag - P
Pep * - P
Sweet Peter * - P
Sweet Substitute - P

Audiophile 105 - 'Memoirs And Recollections'

Fingerbreaker * - P
The Crave - P
The Naked Dance - P, C
Mr. Joe - P
Creepy Feeling - P
Bert Williams * - P
Honky Tonk Music - P
Spanish Swat - P
Buddy Carroll's Rag - H, C
Les Miserere - P
Metamorphosis - P
Tiger Rag - H

In November, 1966 (was it that long ago?), I began reviewing ragtime Lps for The Ragtime Society with a review of Knocky Parker's 4-Lp collection of classic rags entitled 'Golden Treasury Of Ragtime'. At that time, I made the following comments:

> 'The most interesting aspect of this set of Lps is Dr. Parker's heavy use of celeste and harpsichord in addition to the piano. . . . /Ä/ ll things considered, I think that neither instrument has anything in particular to contribute to ragtime. '

Although many things have happened during the intervening years, upon reviewing these Lps, I am able to observe two elements of reassuring consistency -- Parker has not changed his attitude toward ragtime played on instruments other than the piano, and neither have I. As a result, the listener's reaction to this new effort by Parker will probably be importantly determined by his ability to tolerate Morton's earthy melodies being tinkled out on a celeste and to stomach the nauseating sound of the instrument which, for purposes of brevity in the above title listing, I have chosen to call a harpsichord.

Actually, I doubt that this is a harpsichord. I suspect that it is one of those hoked-up pianos that features a type of 'honky-tonk' attachment that produces a harpsichord-like sound, but with none of the airy lightness of a real harpsichord. This suspicion is reinforced during 'Kansas City Stomps', 'Wild Man Blues', 'Milenberg Joys', 'New Orleans Blues', 'Tom Cat Blues' and 'Buddy Carroll's Rag', when the heavy, blurred sound produced by this instrument suddenly becomes muffled for a few bars -- as if Parker suddenly hit the soft pedal for a change of pace and an opportunity to play a sort of 'chase chorus' with himself. The instrument sounds terrible either way, so the contrast isn't much help.

A look at the list of songs Parker has chosen to play on this instrument gives some hint of his intention here. Most of them are among Morton's most famous tunes, and have been recorded by just about everybody who plays ragtime. Parker may well have thought that use of the harpsichord would bring something different to the numbers, enhancing their appeal to persons who already have several other recordings of them. However, the thick, lead-footed sound here grinds the melodies into the ground. And when one has to sit through a whole side of it, as on side two of Audiophile 102, the boredom is virtually intolerable.

The celeste fares rather better, principally because it isn't used much. Except for 'Dead Man Blues', where it is used for the funeral hymn that appears at the beginning and end of the tune, the celeste appears only at the end of a number, after a full statement of the melody has been made, for a couple of variations on the last chorus. It is generally chosen for songs with relatively simple melodic and harmonic structure, and does have

clear articulation compared with the harpsichord. I suppose it does provide a pleasant contrast, though I could do without it also.

Having gone this far, what can be said about this set that's favorable? A lot, actually. First of all, we have Morton's marvelous music, and the high quality of these many compositions demonstrates again Morton's genius. Having these numbers all on one set gives the listener a chance to discover the similarities in many of Morton's tunes; the trios of 'Shreveport Stomp' and 'Chicago Breakdown', for example, illustrate a type of trio approach that Morton was apparently fond of and which appears in other selections in these Lps also. The first strain of 'Buddy Carroll's Rag' turns up with little variation in several Morton tunes, such as the second strain of 'Mr. Jelly Lord'.

On the other hand, these compositions also point out Morton's range of musical ideas. From the introspective and primitive 'Jungle Blues' to the relatively modern-sounding 'Freakish', one can only marvel at Morton's grasp of all aspects of traditional music.

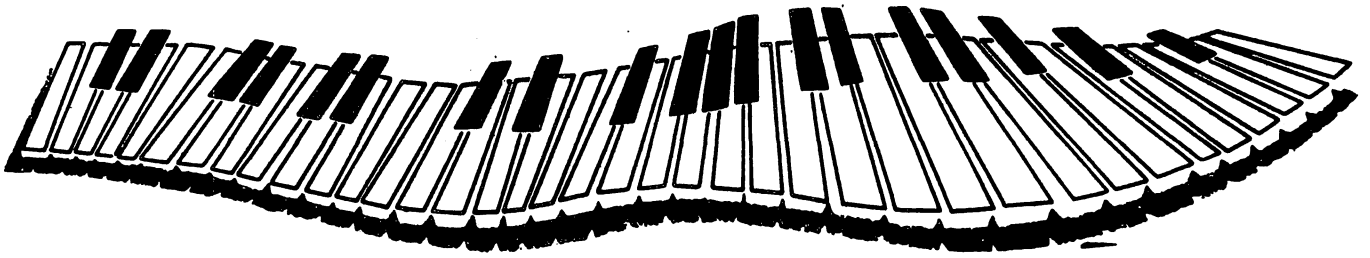
As usual, Parker is at the top of his form, playing with that crisp, clean, delicate sound characteristic of his other ragtime recordings. While he does not confine himself to the printed scores of these tunes (some of them were never published as piano solos, anyway, as far as I know), he is solidly in the Morton tradition.

Other pluses - the accompaniment is excellent, supporting Parker but never overwhelming him; the sound quality, as usual for Audiophile, is incomparable; and many of the tunes are unavailable on Lp or else haven't been recorded since Morton's originals. Audiophile 104 and 105, in particular, are chock-full of seldom-heard numbers performed almost exclusively on the piano, and should appeal to all ragtimers (the Lps are not available singly, however).

One word must be added about the meager liner notes, which raise more questions than they answer. Why, for example, is Audiophile 103 called 'Spanish Rhythms' when it only has three Spanish-tinged tunes (the same number as Audiophile 105)? The tunes apparently are played in chronological order, but how were the dates assigned? The dates generally track the copyright dates given in 'They All Played Ragtime', but there are some unexplained discrepancies; 'Crazy Chord Rag', for example, is listed in TAPR as an unpublished tune copyrighted in 1949, but is assigned a date of 1932 in the liner notes. If that date is supposed to be when Morton wrote it, instead of the copyright date, then why are the last eight tunes assigned dates after Morton's death? Finally, if this is supposed to be a set of <u>all</u> of Morton's <u>piano</u> works, how were the tunes selected for inclusion? 'Boogaboo' and 'Gambling Jack', which TAPR lists as rags, are not included, while 'Sweet Peter', which (as far as I know) was never published and which was recorded by Morton only as a band number, is present.

In summation, it is disappointing that such a massive effort by a ragtimer of Parker's skill should prove to have as many deficiencies as this set. On the other hand, there are a lot of nice things here for the dedicated ragophile and Morton fan to enjoy. For what it's worth, I enjoyed the set more on the second listening, when I knew a little better what to expect.

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY ANNUAL BASH "1971"



The seventh annual bash became the biggest weekend in the history of THE RAGTIME SOCIETY. It centered on the main event of Saturday, November 6th. Once again the attendance went beyond the 300 mark as enthusiastic RAGTIMERS from Canada and the United States descended on the CARA INN at Toronto's International Airport.

For the first time, the SOCIETY moved the bash into a hotel setting. The entire convention floor facilities of the hotel were taken over for the occasion. Even so, the SOCIETY'S tenacious adherence to the notion that the bash must continue to be a private party for the fun and benefit of its own members was readily realized. The arrangements proved to be a big assist for a "Smash Hit Bash".

Two spacious halls were made available with the larger one in use for the principal activities. The sound of ragtime music was almost continuous. The party was billed to commence at 3:00 p. m. Exactly at that time Tex Wyndham mounted the stage and sat down at the Baldwin concert grand piano which had been brought in for the occasion. He opened the proceedings with a rendition of "Mississippi Rag". The choice of number was most appropriate in that this rag is commonly designated as the first published rag of the ragtime era and goes back to January 1897.

Tex Wyndham, the SOCIETY'S author of Record Reviews, again consented to function as master of ceremonies. The correct superlative is hard to find. He did a tremendous job. The audience was never in doubt as to the entertainment being presented at any given time. From 3:00 p. m. on, the tempo steadily increased until the sound of the final note of "a long ragtime day" died away in the small hours of the next morning. -- And what a program it was!

There is much to report about the bash that cannot be reduced to complete detail. Nevertheless an attempt will be made to mention most of the performers along with an indication of their contributions. They were all generous and gracious and fully deserving of enthusiastic response given to their fine efforts by the large gathering.

During the afternoon session we heard some fine ragtime piano. One set after another followed in rapid succession. First, Merrywilliam Newland (Whistling Rufus, Gladiolus Rag, Eugenia Rag); then Gerry Vondy (The Easy Winners, Peacherine Rag) Next Eli Kaufman, banjo, accompanied by Tex Wyndham on piano (Whistling Rufus, Cotton Pickers, The Smiler Rag), followed by Tom Noel (Ragtime Dance, The Cascades, Springtime Of Love, Augustan Club Waltzes). Phil Stock played (Riverside Rag, Daintiness Rag, Lily Rag) and was then joined by Tex Wyndham for a two piano rendition (St. Louis Rag). Gordon Sheard , one of our youngest ragtimers, then performed like the oldtimers (Kansas City Rag, Charleston Rag, Carolina Shout).

Mrs. Walt Gower (nee Kerry Price) made her first appearance as she sang and played (Sweet Substitute, Prairie Queen). It took a brave Russell Stettler to follow up

(Calliope Rag, Black Beauty Rag, Buzzer Rag).

John Arpin, in his official capacity as president of THE RAGTIME SOCIETY, gave a short address of welcome to the assembly. He then launched into a dazzling performance at the piano (Fingerbuster, Magnetic Rag, Lady Be Good, Cottontail Rag). He was joined on the second piano by Tex Wyndham to end the afternoon session (The Ragtime Oriole).

While preparations were being made for a sit-down dinner, the main hall was vacated in favour of the smaller hall, where the interval was filled with more piano music. Roger Hankins, our well known contributor to THE RAGTIMER, started the sets off (Hyacinth Rag, Chocolate Creams, Troublesome Ivories). Then came Jack Cuff (That Teasin' Rag, Preacher And The Bear, Wildflower Rag, 12th St. Rag). Finally, Ben Conroy (Shout For Joy, Yancy's State Street Special, Ammons-Johnson Boogie, Meade Lux Lewis Blues). On return to the now transformed banquet hall, Tex Wyndham played a set (Cleopha Two Step, Kalamity Kid, vocal medley - Alexander's Ragtime Band / I Love A Piano / He's A Rag Picker, and concluded with The Smiler Rag).

At the conclusion of Dinner, Henry Cuesta, of the Jack Teagarden alumni, raised his clarinet to join forces with John Arpin and one of the evening's highlights ensued (Old Fashioned Love, Tin Roof Blues, Honeysuckle Rose, Memories Of You, I've Got A Right To Sing The Blues, Wolverine Blues).

Next to appear was an instrumental group consisting of Walt Gower (clarinet), Tony Hagert (trumpet), Betty Redelsheimer (washboard) and Tex Wyndham (piano). Their contribution was well received (Black And Blue, Sunday, Mama's Gone, Good-Bye). This was followed by the two-piano work of our new and young generation of RAGTIMERS, Gordon Sheard and David Fleury (King Porter Stomp, Maple Leaf Rag).

David Jasen, an enthusiastic recording artist for the ragtime cause, came on strong (Charleston Rag, Elite Syncopations, Raymond's Rag, Everybody's Rag, Maple Leaf Rag). Dave was followed by another two-piano team consisting of Harvey Roehl and Phil Stock (Bohemia Rag, Riverside Rag, Ragtime Oriole).

Another highlight came when singer Kerry Price made her second appearance, backed this time by a strong instrumental group consisting of husband Walt Gower (clarinet), Tex Wyndham (cornet) and Mike Montgomery (piano). Enough said when you identify Kerry with these selections (Melancholy, When Ragtime Rosie Ragged The Rosary, A Good Man Is Hard To Find, Old Fashioned Love, Cake Walkin' Babies).

It was a time of warm emotion when the last surviving peer of the Ragtime Era advanced to the stage. Eubie Blake, now nearing his 89th birthday, belied his age - in his walk, his wit, his vocals, and above all in his professional performance as an entertainer and pianist. While RAGTIMERS paid homage to EUBIE BLAKE it cannot be left unsaid that Eubie paid us the double honor of attending this year while his wife Marion substituted for him in New York on the same night where he was being saluted for his great contributions to the Negro culture. It is something to think about and we express our gratitude to Carl Seltzer who accompanied Eubie to Toronto so that he could be with us. Between ovations Eubie played and sang for a spellbound audience. First it was his "Fizz Water", then his new composition "Novelty Rag". Next came his modern "Dictys On Seventh Avenue", followed by another new composition "Melodic Rag". A special performance of "The Merry Widow" as written and moved into ragtime "a la Blake" delighted the audience. Finally, or so it seemed, Eubie played his immortal "Memories

Of You". But it was not the end, as applause held him on stage. Nostalgia for other memories of Eubie took hold. He played and sang "Sugar Babe" and his own "Good Night, Angeline" from Shuffle Along as well as his 1899 composition "Charleston Rag".

At the conclusion, John Fisher an old friend of Eubie and the original founding head of the RAGTIME SOCIETY made a special presentation to Eubie on behalf of the Society to mark the occasion. It is interesting to add that John Fisher's son, Ian, is following in those ragtime footsteps as a worker in the SOCIETY'S behalf.

Only the fine performance of an able pianist, Dave Flowitt, could follow the Great Man of Ragtime. Dave ended the formal part of the evening with a rousing finale (Fascination, Shy And Sly, Lily Rag, Boll Weevil Rag).

The hour of 10:30 had been reached when the afterhours music took over and for more than three hours the music continued to roll. Both halls were on the go and new pianists were being discovered in surprising numbers. Many delightful incidents occured. You could guess it - on one occasion there was Eubie in the middle of things demonstrating "tricks" on the piano for the neophytes and the young.

The directors and many other members of the SOCIETY worked hard to make the bash a success. John Norris, editor and publisher of CODA MAGAZINE, collaborated with the SOCIETY by operating a well stocked record bar for the convenience of members. The CARA INN staff played a major role in providing for a smooth operation. A sincere "Thank You" goes to all of them.

Many from out of town registered at the hotel for their stay. A Friday night reception turned into a lively warm-up session, with plenty of shop talk for breakfast the next day. On Sunday afternoon a pleasant afterglow session slowly discharged its steam as the last of the weary RAGTIMERS said their good-byes.

What a party! What a way to finish off the first ten years of THE RAGTIME SOCIETY'S activities!

To sum up, there is perhaps no better way than to draw excerpts from the newspaper report of the following Monday morning written by Alastair Lawrie for THE GLOBE AND MAIL headed RAGTIME BLOOMS AGAIN JUST FOR A FEW HOURS. Mr. Lawrie put it this way:

> "I know of only one event in the musical calendar in which the following circumstances could be regarded as rational, if not commonplace:
>
> - a man travels from Austin to play a few bars of boogie woogie piano in Toronto.
>
> - a woman draws applause from a highly knowledgeable audience for her sterling performance on the washboard.
>
> - an 88 year-old piano player and composer says he is going to avoid trying to play some of his own pieces because they are kind of difficult... Eubie is revered in this gathering... the gentle-natured senior citizen of ragtime, who enjoys kidding his audience about his failing capabilities - and then making nonsense of it with a rippling right-hand cadenza.
>
> - a honeymoon couple choose to spend their time in the company of several hundred people in a large hotel room.
>
> There is a special flavour to the meetings of THE RAGTIME SOCIETY, an annual event which makes Toronto the ragtime capital of the world."

FOR THE RECORD

The following is an extract from an article by John Buchanan which appeared in The Sunday Denver Post of June 13, 1971, under the heading: RAGTIMERS HOPPING ON SPARKLING ALBUM.

Anchored along the levee at St. Louis is the largest Mississippi River showboat ever made and the only authentic one of any size left afloat - the Goldenrod. It was built in 1909 and officially commissioned, named, registered and otherwise legitimized as a National Historic Landmark in 1968.

The band-in-residence at the Goldenrod, playing there every Friday and Saturday nights, is the St. Louis Ragtimers. This is one of those - what were they called 40 years ago? - territory bands. Like the Queen City Jazz Band, right here in Denver; Jim Cullum's Happy Jazz Band from San Antonio; the Salty Dogs from Purdue University and Mother's Boys from Detroit.

The point is, the St. Louis Ragtimers have noted their 10th anniversary by issuing an album of happy rag-Dixie jazz recorded one October night last year.

This is a delightful album for the traditionalist. Its the Ragtimers' third album (the other two were for Audiophile).

The Ragtimers are made up of Don Franz, their leader, on tuba; Trebor Tichenor, ragtime musicologist, on piano; Al Stricker, banjo and vocalist; Bill Mason, cornet; Glennon J. J. Meyer, clarinet.

The new album varies from hard core ragtime to swinging Dixie. Tichenor is thoroughly oriented to ragtime. Mason and Meyer are capable of launching into rousing Dixieland. In this combination you have the makings of joyful listening. Lots of good tunes: "I've Been Floating Down the Old Green River," "I Wish't I Was In Peoria," "Mississippi Mud," "At The Mississippi Caabaret," "I Love To Go Swimmin' With Wimmin'," "Give Me The Sultan's Harem," "Sadie Green, the Vamp Of New Orleans," "Red Hot Pepper Stomp," "Heebie Jeebies," "Just a Little While to Stay Here," "Since My Best Gal Turned Me Down," "Kerry Mill's Ragtime Dance," and "The Georgia Grind."

There's a wonderful exuberance and informality in the album. The boys let "Sultan's Harem" die, for example, argue a little bit about it - "Whatever we do, don't quit... use your horn" - and then start all over again, taking it on home in rousing fashion.

You can order this one for $5. 25 from:

Don Franz,
1020 S. Warson Road,
St. Louis, Mo. 63124

Ask for Paseo Stereo, DF-102.

JOHNNY MADDOX GIVES UP HIS AUSTRIAN SECLUSION - RETURNS TO THE RAGTIME CIRCUIT

It was welcome news, earlier this year, to hear that John is back in our midst. Here is what Ed Baker had to say, in his "After Dark" column (Seatle Times April 22, 1971).

"I was nervous," Johnny Maddox said after his opening show Monday night at the Legend Room. "I hadn't touched a piano for eight months, ever since a job in Denver, and I wasn't sure how much would come back right away."

Everything had come back quickly in that first show. He was the same old Johnny Maddox, alias "Crazy Otto" ten steely fingers pounding tirelessly - and skillfully - through a marathon of tunes designed for ragtime piano.

Maddox enjoyed national fame a dozen years ago with his "Crazy Otto" recordings. In the 1960s he became one of the most popular attractions in the Bon Marche circuit of Seatle-area lounges such as the Northgate Legend Room.

Eight months ago, he went to Austria.

"I'd been on the road for 21 years," Maddox said Monday. "I had to get away and relax. I sat around in the Austrian countryside, near Salzburg. It was peaceful, quiet. Eventually it was too peaceful for me, too quiet."

So, Johnny Maddox is on the road again, playing the doctored piano (thumbtacks on some keys of the sounding board to give the instrument that ragtime intonation) which went into Bon Marche storage after Maddox finished his last previous engagement here more than two years ago.

When he is not playing tricky right-hand runs and orchestral left-hand chords, Johnny uses his fluent Tennessee English to give the customers interesting background about the music and its composers, all the way back to W. C. Handy. And now, in addition to early American blues, Maddox plays eine kleine Austrian nachtmusik.

The audience was large and enthusiastic Monday night, and the Tennessee refugee from Austrian serenity felt at home again in the Legend Room.

****

100 RAGTIME CLASSICS - selected by Max Morath

For those members who have expressed interest in this out of print treasure we have word of a few copies left from the last printing which are being completed by xeroxing missing pages (a labour of dedication to Ragtime if ever) by Lee Munsick. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy should write to: "Nostalgia", 113 Meyersville, Gillette, N. J. 07933.

This is just in addition to opening his fascinating "YESTERYEAR MUSEUM" in Morristown, N. J.

Lee would also be interested in doing a second edition of 100 Rags with 15 to 20 additions, chosen by Max of course, if enough people are interested. If so, write him and let him know.

SOMETHING DOING...

JOHN ARPIN	- at the Waldorf-Astoria, 8:30 p. m. to 12:30 a. m. in Toronto
MIKE MONTGOMERY	- The Dakota Inn, Rathskeller, Detroit, Fri. Nights
MAX MORATH	- on the road with his show "At The Turn Of The Century"
CHARLIE RASCH	- & "Sister Kate" with the Jacktown Jazz Band, at Bill Cones' Downstairs Saloon, Jackson, Mich. Fri. & Sat. Nights
TREBOR TICHENOR	- and the Saint Louis Ragtimers can be heard on The Goldenrod Showboat in St. Louis, Missouri
PETER TURNER	- at The Bird Cage, Cambridge, England
TEX WYNDHAM	- and The Red Lion Jazz Band, at The Surry Restaurant 1100 Philadelphia Pike, Wilmington, Del.

PERFORMERS: Please keep us posted on your whereabouts and your schedule will appear in this column.

THE WINTER GARDEN RAG

by ABE OLEMAN 5

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